

May 2005



MONTANA GEAR UP

GAINING EARLY AWARENESS & READINESS FOR
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education / Montana University System



Director's Message by Sandy Merdinger

This is our last newsletter for the school year – the year has passed so quickly! In our office the last month was especially busy with the submission of our grant proposal, completion of the Annual Performance Report, awarding of the Montana GEAR UP Pathways Scholarships and essay contest awards, the Montana Indian Education Association Conference, the Montana School Counselor Association Spring Training Institute and the last liaisons meeting of the school year.

Thanks go out to so many people for their assistance with the new grant proposal! It was a huge undertaking but we are optimistic that our proposal will be funded. Unfortunately, we won't have notification until August but will let you know as soon as we find out. We will work on a more readable version of the proposal to have ready for you in the fall.

Although we are optimistic that our proposal will be funded, the next unknown is whether there will be GEAR UP funding for years 2006 and beyond. At this point GEAR UP is not in the President's budget or in the budget resolution recently passed by Congress. In order for GEAR UP to continue beyond next year, Congress must appropriate funding for the program in their next appropriations bill. The Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services appropriations bill is currently scheduled for markup in June which means the decision for funding will potentially be made very soon. For more information on this issue, check out www.edpartnerships.org.

We collaborated with the Montana School Counselor Association (MSCA) in the third annual professional development meeting for school counselors. MSCA did a great job organizing the meeting and we are happy to partner with them to continue to serve school counselors.

This week we had our last liaisons meeting of the year and for this grant. It was bittersweet, as we acknowledged not all schools will continue with GEAR UP, but we are looking forward to further growth in the program if we receive a new grant. A huge thank you to the liaisons for making GEAR UP a reality in their schools. Although GEAR UP cannot be a one-person job since it takes support from the entire school to have a successful program, the liaisons have done great work in making it happen at the school level. What a great service you have done for your students!

One of the high points of the year for me is the awarding of the Montana GEAR UP Pathways Scholarships. This year I had the honor of calling fifteen students to notify them that they will receive a scholarship valued at up to \$20,000. The expressions of joy and disbelief at the same time are a reminder of the value of this program. I only wish we had more funding for all of our deserving GEAR UP students.

Thanks to all of you for your good work this year as we all work to serve our students. You are an inspiration to me by all that you do. Have a great summer!

Pathways Scholarships & Essay Contest!

As you will recall from last month's newsletter, we announced this year's Achievement Grant recipients—all 262 of them! This month, we are excited to announce the 2005 GEAR UP Pathways Scholarship recipients, as well as the MGSLP Essay Contest winners. Fifty-one students from sixteen GEAR UP schools submitted excellent applications for the \$20,000 Pathways Scholarship, and after a competitive selection process 15 recipients have been awarded! You can read more about the Pathways Scholarship recipients on page four. The MGSLP Essay Contest winners have also been announced (see page five), with 172 winners selected from over 1700 entries! The Montana Guaranteed Student Loan Program (MGSLP) is continuing their well-received Essay Contest not only for Montana GEAR UP students but also for GEAR UP partnership programs. Their support of this important GEAR UP activity is much appreciated. Many thanks to Mary Taylor and Dawny McElderry with MGSLP for their work in administering these wonderful GEAR UP elements, as well as to our selection committee and readers for reviewing the applications and essays. Thank you!

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The GEAR UP Spotlight: Browning High School

The Browning High School AIBL (American Indian Business Leaders) Chapter has been in existence for four years. The group of students has been involved in AIBL since the 8th grade and has won Chapter of the Year for the past two years. Throughout the four years the club has attended conferences in Polson Montana, Minneapolis Minnesota, Las Vegas Nevada, and this year Seattle Washington. On April 7th the club boarded an 8-hour late train at 2:00 am for an adventurous journey to Seattle. While it was a tough journey getting there it was definitely an adventure to remember. The club worked extremely hard all year

to fundraise for the conference and was able to raise well over \$5000 to attend. Though the main priority was attending the conference, the students were also able to attend a Seattle Supersonics/Lakers basketball game, meet Native American actor Adam Beach (*Windtalkers*, *Joe Dirt*, *Smoke Signals*, *Dance Me Outside*), travel through Seattle in a limousine, and buy coats for all of the club members to wear in Seattle. This year AIBL teamed up with Tina Wagner of MGSLLP in Helena who heads up a non-profit organization called "Binky Patrol" which is an organization that provides blankets to children of special circumstances. Our club not only raised money to attend the AIBL conference but also raised enough money to purchase material to make 10 large tie blankets and 12 baby blankets to donate to the Binky Patrol. The highlight of this trip was being able to personally deliver one of the blankets to a young girl from Browning who is currently in Seattle undergoing treatment for cancer. If you are interested in starting an AIBL Chapter in your school and would like more information, please feel free to contact us at Browning High School.

PICTURE:

Pictured L to R Top Row: Melissa Running Crane, Tamberly Wagner, Kelli Parsons, Adam Beach, Katie Whitford, Jenna Skunkcap, Toni Jo Spotted Bear

Bottom Row: Jerci Powell, Coy Harwood, Jessica Magee, Kelsey Hall, Kathlene Running Crane, Alicia Ladd



The GEAR UP Spotlight II: Rocky Boy High School

Rocky Boy High School Juniors take to the road! MSU-Billings

On February 27th, 2005 seven juniors from the Rocky Boy High School took the road to attend the MSU-Billings "Preview Day" for students who were interested in finding out about the college and what they offer. The students spent the night at the Red Roof Inn in Billings. The best part the students say about the trip was all the good food they got to eat. They were very thankful, and promised they would get their reports in by the end of the week. Not only were there students in attendance, some parents attended as well!!! Parents are most important in a student's educational life so it was a great honor to have these three parents come along. Students spent most of the day hearing people talk about the different degree programs and financial aid. They also got the chance to talk with some students and a former Rocky Boy High School graduate as well. They had the pleasure of tasting the campus food, and found it very interesting, but not too tasty!!! They also visited with Quentin Graham from the Multicultural Student Services office. He gave them some background on what MSU-Billings has to offer Native American Indian Students. The trip was a success and thanks go out to all students and parents, and oh the bus driver!! Thanks again!!!



Montana School Counselor's Association Conference

For the third year, Montana GEAR UP collaborated with Montana School Counselor Association (MSCA) to sponsor the MSCA Spring Training Institute. Over 200 participants from across Montana attended the two-day event held at the Holiday Inn, Bozeman on April 14th & 15th.

The 2005 Spring Training Institute was entitled "School Counselors: Training for Tomorrow" and was designed to provide practical, hands-on information. Topics were covered with half-day or full-day training sessions rather than brief, informational presentations. Some training sessions included:

- Using Adventure initiatives as part of your guidance curriculum
- Peer mediation programs
- BRIDGES-educational and career planning with students
- Helping students navigate female socialization/aggression
- Helping students navigate male socialization/aggression
- Exploring Careers/Life Skills with students
- Peer mentoring programs
- Cultivating Student Success by introducing early college and financial aid awareness in grades 5-12

At the Recognition Luncheon, two members of the GEAR UP community were recognized for outstanding service and commitment. Alan Kratz received the Montana K-12 School Counselor of the Year award. Mr. Kratz is the School Counselor at Heart Butte School and he was nominated for the award by the senior class, who have worked with him since they were in kindergarten! Also receiving special recognition for outstanding support and commitment to MSCA was Montana GEAR UP Director, Sandy Merdinger. Sandy was very surprised by the much-deserved award and it was clear that the MSCA organization understands the impact of GEAR UP's support on their organization. Congratulations to both Alan and Sandy!

May & Summer Reminders

- GEAR UP Final Programmatic Reports are due June 10.
- It's not too late for students to apply for the statewide summer programs at Montana Tech and Dawson Community College! Deadline for applications is May 13th, or until filled. For more info, contact Montana Tech—Annette Kankelborg at (406) 496-4694 and Dawson—Marilyn Dutton at (406) 377-9405.
- If you would like someone from the state office to present GEAR UP Pathways Scholarships, achievement grants, or essay awards at your school, please call Mary Taylor at (406) 444-0638 or Cyrus Malkin at (406) 444-0056 as soon as you know the presentation date.
- NCCEP National GEAR UP Conference is July 17-20 in San Francisco. More information can be found at <http://www.edpartnerships.org>.
- Montana Indian Education for All Institute is June 13-15 in Missoula. Contact Everall Fox at (406) 444-3013 or efox@mt.gov.
- OPI & College Board's Pre-AP Instructional Leadership for Administrators is July 13 in Billings. Contact Kathy Mollohan at (406) 444-4317 for more information.
- Montana Reading Institute is August 8-12 in Bozeman. Visit www.montana.edu/cs/mri for more info.
- It's time to recognize your GEAR UP seniors upon their graduation from high school! Also, keep in touch with your graduates heading off to college by getting their contact information.
- This newsletter is also available online by visiting www.gearup.montana.edu.
- Please let us know if someone would like to be added to the newsletter distribution list.

Montana GEAR UP Pathways Scholarship Winners

Montana GEAR UP is very honored to announce the recipients of the 2004-2005 round of Montana GEAR UP Pathways Scholarship. In all, 51 applications were submitted from which the selection committee had the challenging task of selecting 15 winners. This is three times as many recipients as last year! Congratulations go out to:

Tyler Hoyt from Browning High School who will be attending The University of Montana in the fall and will study Psychology. Tyler has been extensively involved in community service as well as music, voice and theater through high school and placed second at the 2005 Big Sky Chapter of the National Teachers of Singing Competition.

Nicolas Rink from Browning High School who will be attending The University of Montana in the fall where he will be majoring in Geology. Nicholas presented a wonderful DVD video production entitled "A Stroll Through the Woods," a fifteen-minute long claymation project.

Tomi Bick from Charlo High School who will be attending Montana State University in Bozeman and will start in General Studies. Tomi has been a member of the National Honors Society since 10th grade and was a Girls State Delegate in 2004.

Jade Kost from Charlo High School who will be attending Rocky Mountain College where she will be studying either Physical Therapy or Psychology. Jade is currently the president of Charlo High School's National Honor Society, and was Class President in the 2003-2004 school year.

Michael Doyle from Hardin High School who will be attending Montana State University and studying Biological Sciences. Michael is involved in Student Council and theater, and played Polonius in "15 Minute Hamlet" at the Thespian Festival in Missoula.

Chelsey Old Elk from Hardin High School who will be attending The University of Montana and working towards her degree in Pharmacy. Chelsey submitted a collection of current events collages which she put together over the course of months. Chelsey is the president of Hardin High's American Indian Science and Engineering Society.

Kathleen Schaak from Hardin High School who will be attending Montana State University where she will be majoring in Ag Business. Kathleen is FFA President and volunteers in making and donating outfits for premature babies.

Julia Lindquist from Richey High School (Bloomfield School) who will be attending The University of Montana—Western where she will study Computer Graphics and Animation. Julia has been on the Honor Roll since 1999 and received the Advanced Art Award at Richey High School in 2004.

Jeremiah Allen from Flathead High School (Kila School) who will be attending Montana State University at Bozeman where he will be majoring in Civil Engineering. Jeremiah is vice president of Flathead FFA and has started his own excavation business.

Naomi Limberhand from Lame Deer High School who will be attending Montana State University at Bozeman where she will be studying Computer Science. Naomi has been on Student Council for four years and has served as both Junior and Senior Class President as well as President of the Morning Star Indian Club.

Trista Ebensteiner from St. Ignatius High School who will be attending The University of Montana where she will be studying Elementary Education and Psychology. She was Class President her Freshman year and is currently Senior Class President.

Lacy Frey from St. Ignatius High School who will be attending The University of Montana and majoring in Criminology. Lacy has been on the "high honor" roll for four years and is interested in forensics and law enforcement.

Lane Plumage from St. Ignatius High School who will be attending The University of Montana where he will be majoring in Biology with a minor in Microbiology. Lane has won the Outstanding Bill Award in the Montana Youth Legislature, where he has served as both legislator and senator.

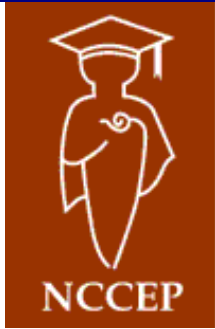
Austin Domek from Wibaux County High School who will be attending Montana State University at Bozeman and majoring in Microbiology with a Pre-Veterinary emphasis. Austin has spent the last two years mentoring Elementary students and helped pour concrete for a new park at the Wibaux County Nursing Home.

Adam Arthur from Winnett High School who will be attending Montana State University—Billings College of Technology where he will study Human Resources. Adam has been a National Honor Society member for three years has worked for five years as a Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Hunter Education instructor.

GEAR UP Essay Contest Winners

<u>School</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Name</u>
Arrowhead	Amanda Loh	Hardin cont.	Jacob Wynne-Wilson	Lincoln cont.	Brittney Headly
	Brandi Schull		Allison York		Hannah Fields
	Katherine Bucklin		Kathleen Bird in Ground		Katie Redford
	John Fanuzzi		Sierra Davis		Alan Kinkie
	Caroline Greiman		Teri Lea McCormick		Tiffany Laney
Box Elder	Tiffany Meiwald		Ashley Wacker	Richey Rocky Boy	Billy Bromberg
	Steven Morsette		Jeff Brokaw		Julia Lindquist
	Kaycee Henry		Erin Flack		Martina St. Pierre
	Toni Morsette		Chelsey Johnson		Tashina Placencia
	Aracella Ramos		Matt Maxwell		Deena Sunchild
Brady	Amber Wycherly		Jamie Morton		Chavonne Parker
	Andrew Bishop		Taylor Collins		Michael Ann Windy Boy
	Kayla Bokma		Joseph Doyle		Jacyne Coffee
	Kelly Jo Lee		Laura Istrate		Tamika Parisian
	Tiffany Townsend		Nickole Minear		Michael Eagleman
Browning	Corey Walker		David Cassidy	Simms	Ryan Johnson
	Slater Henkel		Ryan Chavez		Kaylee Myers
	Laura Hall		Kim Fassett		Roy Curtis
	Leo Rattler		Robyn Iron		Casey Cable
	Wesley Running Crane		Lex Read Bird		Max Willet
	Noel Stewart		Jimmie Secrest	St. Ignatius	Ben Lipscomb
	Teresa Reeves		Abby Wynne-Wilson		Lane Plumage
	Tyler Hoyt		Jessi Real Bird		Katie McDonald
	Bristen Belcourt		Stephanie Dale		Rayanna Ranel
	Sheylin McKay		Alyssa Keller		Josh Bowers
	Marquelle Bear Medicine		Lacey Kulbeck	Vaughn	Rachael Burda
	Sheldon Comes At Night		Chelsea Morales		Paige Allen
	Andrew Heavy Runner		Mario Miner		Alexsys Beard
	Meghan Tailfeathers		Rayel Brown		Sami Carlsson
	Dylan DesRosier		Bradee Hawley		Ridge Karr
	Michael Fast Buffalo		Taylor Faulkinberry	Wibaux	Moriah Rushton
	Corrina Gervais		Mickey Kulbeck		Caitlin Adorni
	Taila Wuintero		Kameron Gilham		April Kiedrowski
	Hayley Carr	Heart Butte	Timothy Reeves		Austin Domek
	Revais Liberty		Blake Wombold		Kali Petermann
	Rhondell Esterby		Miriah Kipp		LesLee Rogers
	Jade Kost		Jake Arrow Top		Courtney Adorni
	Alex Esterby	Kila	Amanda Anderson		Jeremiah Garneau
	Kerry Woodruff		Tyler Barnes		Kai Hoagland
	April Salois		Justin Greskowiak	Winnett	Malori Woodford
	Jessica Weber		Gaelyn Moore		Cassie Kiehl
	Alex Archer		Preston Gray		Chelsea McKenna
	Samejo Kain	Lame Deer	Cinnamon Spear		Keturah Stahl
	Katie Bryant		Nina Limberhand		Kristen Weller
Evergreen	Whitney Jones		Kaitlin Sholder		Sam Dembek
	Matt Lake		Abby Feedback		Shy Iverson
	Kasha Musialowski	Lincoln	Lindsay Sherman		Katie Shaw
	Amanda Prichett		Christine Heisler	Wyola	Mariah Blair Brady
	Jared Pitcher		Emily Jo Cuyle		Charlie Little Light
Flathead	Jennifer Fallon		Lindsey Russell		Rochelle Driftwood
	Lionel Gros Ventre		Randie Brady		Tanisha Rides Horse

Montana Student Selected for Youth Leadership Summit



Montana GEAR UP is pleased to announce that a Montana student has been selected for the Youth Leadership Summit at the NCCEP Annual GEAR UP Conference. Ashley Haley of Box Elder was one of eight Montana student applicants. While all of the applications were superb, Montana GEAR UP is very pleased with Ashley's selection, as only 30 students were selected across the country.

According to the National Council for Community Education Partnerships (NCCEP), "The goal of the summit is to allow students to voice their opinions, concerns, and suggestions pertaining to education through a report to the Conference attendees. Thirty students are selected to be first time attendees at the Summit. These students, known as scholars, come from GEAR UP programs throughout the United States and its territories. Scholars are selected based on their academic achievements, leadership roles, and letters of recommendation. They are joined by four returning scholars from the previous year, known as alumni. Alumni serve as counselors and guides to the scholars, and assist the NCCEP and Booz Allen Hamilton staff with administering the events. Collectively, they work to create a summit report focused on what educators should consider when designing strategies and programs aimed at improving student achievement; as well as help business and community leaders, policy makers, and educators understand the issues that students believe to be important for improving student success and strengthening the education system as a whole.

"During the Summit, students engage in active discussions regarding the challenges and successes facing education today from their perspective. They have the opportunity to compare and contrast their experiences with students from a variety of other backgrounds, schools, and regions. Additionally, students participate in leadership development, teambuilding, and brainstorming sessions, all the while working towards creating their summit report. The culmination of the Summit, and the highlight of the NCCEP Annual Conference, is the presentation of the report to the conference attendees. For a half an hour, the Scholars are given the stage to voice their opinions and share their ideas. Conference attendees frequently comment that the Summit report brings a fresh and energized perspective that reminds them why they became engaged in the education arena." Congratulations Ashley!

GEAR UP National Conference—Montana delegation

The NCCEP Annual GEAR UP Conference is being held this year in San Francisco, July 17-20. Montana will have an eleven person delegation to this year's conference. The following people were selected from the applications we received: Alan Pule, St. Ignatius liaison; Janice Parker, Box Elder liaison; Linda Ann Kinsey, Hays-Lodge Pole counselor; and Deborah Beston, Evergreen School teacher. They will be joined by Box Elder principal Mark Irvin who will be the chaperone for Youth Leadership Summit scholar Ashley Haley. The state office will be sending director Sandy Merdinger as well as program managers Andi Rankin and Annette Walstad. OPI GEAR UP specialist G. Bruce Meyers and MGSLP outreach coordinator Tina Wagner complete the delegation. In all, Montana GEAR UP has great representation, and Montana flags will be waving proudly!

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**Montana Guaranteed Student Loan
Program website:**
www.mgslp.state.mt.us

National GEAR UP website:
www.ed.gov/programs/gearup/